

Gore Lauds DoD Reforms

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WASHINGTON — Vice President Al Gore praised the Defense Department Nov. 10 for its plan to become “leaner, more competitive, and more efficient in its business practices.”

Gore was at the Pentagon along with Defense Secretary William Cohen, Deputy Defense Secretary John Hamre, and Army Gen. Henry H. Shelton, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, for the roll-out of a new defense reform initiative.

Based on the findings of the Defense Reform Task Force, headed by Hamre, the plan’s goal is to save money for modernization muscle by cutting fat — excess staff, redundant functions, and infrastructure.

Replacing aging military equipment is an urgent national requirement, Gore said. “We have the money we need to keep America’s military forces fully modern and fully capable, but we are spending too much of our defense money on the wrong stuff,” he said.

Gore said the “wrong stuff” includes too much paperwork and “an industrial age bureaucracy that is too expensive and too slow to keep pace in the world today.” Businesses cannot survive like that, and neither can national defense, he said.

Cohen announced his decision to downsize and restructure his headquarters staff. Gore noted he and the defense secretary had agreed, “Big, all-powerful, all-



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knowing corporate headquarters operations are a thing of the past. Today’s world needs fast-moving, fast-thinking, fully empowered front-line workers and front-line fighters.”

Shelton said the military’s senior leaders agreed with the reform initiative. He said, considering the smaller force, the Department needs to rebalance its “tooth-to-tail” ratio to be sure funds are available for modernization and joint operations.

“We need to have agile organizations that have been trimmed in size, that can move quickly, that have the best information technology available so we can direct and support our armed forces and our joint operations in the best possible manner,” Shelton said.

Gore particularly hailed DoD plans for incorporating private industry practices. “Government should emulate the best in business, learn from them, and adopt their best business practices,” he said.

“Information technology is changing everything from the way we buy equipment to the way we fight,” Gore said. “It is the key to America’s future strength as a defense leader, just as it is the key to America’s future as a business leader.”

Preparing for the future is one of the biggest challenges DoD leaders face, Cohen said. “How do we streamline, reform, and reengineer ourselves to provide the necessary dollars which will

keep us on the very front end of technology and to allow our troops to remain the superior force they are today?...We need to make sure we have the resources necessary to prepare for the future."

Cohen said DoD will apply such successful private enterprise activities as creating a paperless environment by 2001. Holding up a foot-high stack of finance regulations in one hand and a CD-ROM in the other, Cohen illustrated the past and future. "By next July," he said, "all of these regulations will either be on CD-ROM or on the Internet."

Cohen said a revolution in the department's business affairs is needed to keep pace with the revolution in military affairs. "What we are doing is providing a corporate vision for the Department of Defense," he said. "We want to ensure we continue to lead in a world of accelerating change."

Cohen announced the following decisions:

- DoD is seeking congressional approval to do two more rounds of base closures, in 2001 and 2005. Projected annual savings for each round is \$1.4 billion.
- The Office of the Secretary of Defense staff will be cut 33 percent from about 3,000 to 2,000 over the next 18 months.
- Field agencies will be cut 36 percent, from about 8,000 to 5,000 over the next two years.
- The Joint Staff and activities controlled by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff will be cut 29 percent, from about 2,600 to 1,800.
- Unified command/combatant command headquarters will be cut by about 10 percent, from about 18,000 to 16,200.
- Defense agencies will be cut 21 percent, from about 120,000 to 95,000, over five years.
- The On-Site Inspection Agency, the Defense Special Weapons Agency, and the Defense Technology and Security Administration will consolidate to become the Threat Reduction and Treaty Compliance Agency.
- By January 2000, DoD will privatize all utilities — electric, water, waste water, and natural gas. The Defense Fuels Supply Center will become the Defense Energy Management Center to manage energy, not a power infrastructure.
- More government work will be opened to competition from private industry. Plans call to compete such areas as payroll, retiree pay, personnel services, leased property management, and defense reutilization centers.

Editor's Note: This information is in the public domain on the World Wide Web and may be accessed at <http://www.dtic.mil/afps/news> on the American Forces Press Service Home Page.

May I Have This Dance...



THE ADVANCED PROGRAM MANAGEMENT COURSE (APMC 97-3) GRADUATION DINNER-DANCE ON DEC. 10 AT THE RADISSON PLAZA HOTEL, ALEXANDRIA, VA., GAVE SENIOR DSMC STAFF AND FACULTY AN EXCELLENT EXCUSE TO "DANCE THE NIGHT AWAY" AFTER GRADUATING OVER 300 STUDENTS FROM APMC 97-3. FROM LEFT: AIR FORCE COL. SAM BROWN, DEAN, ACQUISITION PROGRAMS DIVISION, AND WIFE, WILLA; TIM SHANNON, ACTING DEAN, FACULTY DIVISION, AND WIFE, MARY; ARMY BRIG. GEN. RICHARD A. BLACK, FORMER DSMC COMMANDANT, AND WIFE, MARY; RICHARD H. REED, PROVOST AND DEPUTY COMMANDANT, AND WIFE, KARLA. (KARLA IS THE DSMC COLLEGE REGISTRAR.)